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The Rev. Henry Adams Sergison Atwood was born on January 13, 1800, in the parish of St. Margaret's, Westminster, where his father, who died young, was curate. His father was a grandson of the Rev. George Atwood, Archdeacon of Taunton, and nephew of George Atwood, Fellow and Tutor of Trinity College, Cambridge, who invented the well-known contrivance called Atwood's machine, which is still used for lecture-room experiments to demonstrate the laws of uniformly accelerated motion. Henry Adams Sergison Atwood was entered at Queen's College, Oxford. He took his M.A. degree in 1824, and shortly afterwards, having obtained orders, he became curate first of Banbury and then of Kenilworth. In 1839 he was collated to the rectory of Ashelworth, in the county of Gloucester, where, in addition to the duties of his parish, he devoted himself most successfully to tuition. Several of his pupils have since taken distinguished positions in the political world. In 1827 he was elected a Fellow of the Astronomical Society, and, consequently, at the time of his death he was one of the oldest Fellows of the Society. He was always devotedly attached to the study of astronomy, though his many duties prevented him from indulging his tastes, as he no doubt would have done if he had been less occupied with his parish and his pupils. In 1860 he accompanied the expedition which was sent out in H.M.S. *Himalaya* to observe the total eclipse of the Sun in Spain. At the time of totality Mr. Atwood was stationed, together with Mr. Francis Galton and Mr. Gray, on a tower outside the little town of La Guardia, near Logroño, from which they had an excellent view of the surrounding country. It had been arranged that Mr. Atwood should devote himself to meteorological observations, but he also found time to observe the changes of tint upon the clouds and sky as the shadow advanced. During totality he observed the positions of several of the red prominences through a small telescope, and scrutinised the structure of the corona. Immediately after totality was over he was fortunate in observing the rays from the cusps of the thin solar crescent which have only been seen and described by a few other observers. An account of his observation is given in vol. xli. of the *Memoirs*. Mr. Atwood died on June 22, 1877.

Admiral Sir Edward Belcher, K.C.B., was born in the year 1800. His great grandfather, Jonathan Belcher, was Governor of Massachusetts before the War of Independence, and his grandfather, also named Jonathan Belcher, was chief justice of Nova Scotia. Edward Belcher first brought himself into public notice when a lieutenant on board the surveying ship *Blossom*. In a voyage which lasted nearly four years he visited and assisted materially in fixing the Astronomical positions of various islands, and expunged from the charts many supposed dangers which the uncertainties of longitude had repeated in several positions, and which had till then proved a source of

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anxiety and perplexity to the ordinary navigator. Having left the coast of America, the *Blossom* visited Easter, Deucie, and the Pitcairn Islands, and proceeded thence to the Gambier Islands, which were surveyed in considerable detail. Thence they sailed to the Coral Isles of Polynesia, where several new islands were discovered and the positions of others correctly determined.

In April 1826 the *Blossom* received orders to sail for the Behring Straits, *via* the Sandwich Islands and Kamtchaka; a portion of her captain's instructions being that she should pass the summers of 1826–27 in this region, in order to co-operate with Parry and Franklin, then exploring in the Arctic Seas, in case either of them should succeed in accomplishing the North-west passage. In July 1826 the ship reached Kotzebue Sound, when, with the assistance of her decked boat, a survey of coast to the north was commenced, the ship herself reaching a point named Cape Franklin in 71° 7′ N. latitude and her barge a position considerably further advanced. Foiled in their expectation of meeting Franklin's land party, although the boat had reached within 120 miles of his furthest western position, the *Blossom* quitted Behring Straits, and returned to resume her survey duties in the Pacific until the time should again come round for a second attempt. During the next few months they visited San Francisco, the Sandwich Islands, and the Loo Choo Islands. Passing thence northward, Kotzebue Sound was again reached on the 5th August 1827. Here the decked boat was prepared for a second voyage of exploration to the north, and under Lieut. Belcher's command the coasts of Chamisso Island were examined to a position beyond Icy Cape, a distance of between three and four hundred miles. On his return to Kotzebue Sound, after experiencing many risks, his little vessel was driven on shore in a gale of wind and totally wrecked on Chamisso Island, three of her crew being drowned.

The *Blossom* now finally quitted the Behring Straits, all hope of obtaining the principal object of her mission, viz. the meeting with Franklin's expedition, being at an end. Having visited California, she returned to England in October 1828.

Lieutenant Belcher was promoted to the rank of commander in 1829, and in 1830 he was appointed to the command of the surveying ship *Etna*, employed in surveying the West Coast of Africa and parts of the Mediterranean. Having surveyed the dangerous shoals which extend some seventy miles off the coast in the neighbourhood of Rio Grande, south of the Gambia, he was ordered to pass the winter of 1832 within the bar of the Duero River, for the protection of British interests during the struggles between the parties of Dons Pedro and Miguel. While engaged in this work he observed the transit of *Mercury* of May 5, 1832. An account of his observations is given in vol. ii. of the *Monthly Notices*.

Having returned to England in 1833, he was employed for some time on the survey of the coasts of the United Kingdom,

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and in 1837 he was appointed to the command of a surveying expedition in the Pacific, composed of H.M.S. *Sulphur* and *Starling*. After five years' work, during which he succeeded in establishing several important geographical facts, he returned to England in July 1842, and was nominated a Companion of the Bath, and shortly after received the honour of knighthood.

In 1852 Sir Edward Belcher was appointed to the command of an expedition to the Arctic Seas in search of the missing ships of Sir John Franklin. This expedition consisted of five vessels, and was separated into two divisions. The one proceeded westward to Melville Island, while Sir Edward, with two ships, ascended the Wellington Channel and wintered at its head, in an inlet which he named Northumberland Sound. In the spring of 1853 he personally explored by sledges to the north, discovered and partially surveyed North Cornwall, in latitude 77° 30′ N., and the strait bearing his name leading eastward into Jones' Sound; while other parties from his ships discovered and explored the north shores of Bathurst and Melville Islands, and, crossing the latter, communicated with the division of the squadron under Captain Kellett. A second winter was passed in Wellington Channel, and in the autumn of 1854, as there seemed no probability of extricating his ships, four of them were abandoned, and the crews returned over the ice to Beechey Island, whence they proceeded to England.

With this voyage Sir Edward Belcher's active professional career closed. He became a Fellow of our Society in December 1837, and died in London on March 18, 1877, in his seventy-eighth year. We are indebted to the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* for the information given above with regard to his many surveying voyages.

James Whatman Bosanquet was born on January 26, 1804. He was educated at Westminster School, and was taken into his father's banking house in 1822. He married, in 1840, the only daughter of the late Sir Nicholas Conyngham Tindal; in 1854, Frances, daughter of the late Lord John Somerset; and, in 1864, Emily, daughter of the late James Best, Esq., of Park House, Boxley.

His favourite study was Biblical Chronology. With the view of fixing dates for some of the facts mentioned in Hebrew and Assyrian history, he applied himself, with the assistance of the Astronomer Royal and Mr. Hind, to the study of early eclipses. Some of the principal dates verified by means of his researches are:

The date of the earthquake mentioned in Amos i. 1, which, it appears, took place on June 15, B.C. 763. The vision of Amos is described as taking place "two years before the earthquake," in the twenty-third year of Uzziah. This earthquake was identified by Mr. Bosanquet with an earthquake

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